

Attorney Docket No. 020111

REMARKS

Claims 19-26, 28-29, and 31-32 are currently pending in the application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Examiner has rejected claims 19, 20, 28 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Smolyar et al. (US Patent 6,314,130). These rejections are respectfully traversed. The Examiner's rejection is improper. The Smolyar reference issued on Nov. 6, 2001. The filing date of the present application is Feb. 28, 2002, less than one year after the issuance of the Smolyar reference. Thus, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Notwithstanding the improper rejection, the following arguments are offered to further prosecution.

With respect to claim 19, the Examiner states that Smolyar discloses restricting each finger from tracking outside motion limits and points to Col. 8 lines 36-40. The Examiner is mistaken. Smolyar does not describe or suggest the claimed motion limits. Smolyar instead, permits the fingers move within 1.5Tc of each other and then locks the fingers into a finger block so that they move in lockstep. See Col 9 lines 28-35 ("a redefinition of the finger blocks occurs whenever the finger movement of step 14 causes new fingers to become **within RANGE** of each other..."). So the Smolyar reference doesn't teach or suggest restricting each finger from tracking outside motion limits.

Smolyar also does not teach or suggest regenerating the motion limits. The Examiner points to Col. 9 lines 28-30. However, that discussion merely says that if fingers need to be moved, they are. It is clearly just describing moving fingers to track the multipaths that each finger is assigned to. There is absolutely no mention or suggestion of any motion limits. Also, the Examiner points to Fig. 1 showing direction metrics 1 and 2. This figure just shows the case where finger 1 and finger 2 both track their multipaths in the same direction. See Col. 1 lines 50-55. Again, there is absolutely no mention or suggestion of any motion limits.

With respect to claims 20, 28 and 31, the Examiner points to Col. 8 lines 36-40 for the premise that Smolyar discloses an advance limit and a retard limit. The Examiner is mistaken. Smolyar does not mention or suggest any retard limit or advance limit. Smolyar instead, lets the

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fingers move within the 1.5Tc and then locks the fingers into a finger block so that they move in lockstep. See Col 9 lines 28-35 ("a redefinition of the finger blocks occurs whenever the finger movement of step 14 causes new fingers to become within RANGE of each other..."). So the Smolyar reference doesn't teach or suggest any retard limit or advance limit. In fact, because the redefinition of finger blocks occurs after fingers become within RANGE of each other, it is possible that Smolyar's fingers merge.

The Examiner points to Fig. 2B direction metric 10 and Fig. 2C direction metric 27 as teaching the advancing the retard limit and the retarding the retard limit claim elements. The Examiner is mistaken. These figures merely illustrate the situation where finger 1, finger 2 and finger 3 each track their multipaths in the same direction. There is no mention or suggestion of a retard limit or advance limit or making any changes to those limits.

These rejections should be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Smolyar et al. over La Rosa et al. (US Patent No. 6,078,611). Claim 21 is based upon claim 20 which is believed to be allowable. Thus, claim 21 should be allowable as well.

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CONCLUSION

This case should now be in condition for allowance.

In light of the foregoing, the Examiner's reconsideration of this application with a view toward allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned agent if a telephone call could help solve any remaining items.

Please charge any fees or overpayments that may be due with this response to Deposit Account No. 17-0026.

Respectfully submitted,

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